

# ***Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2004 Nominees***

## **Ghost Soldier by Elaine Marie Alphin**

Alexander has the ability to see ghosts. But it's been several years since his last encounter. When he reluctantly joins his father on a long trip away from home, a surprise awaits him. In the unfamiliar territory of North Carolina, Alexander is confronted by the ghost of a young soldier who lost his life in the Civil War. As an unusual friendship develops between the two, Alexander is drawn into a new reality where he comes face to face with the haunting past of his soldier friend. But can Alexander help this troubled ghost, and can he, finally, come to terms with his own disturbing past?

## **Storm Warriors by Elisa Carbone**

In 1895, after his mother's death, twelve-year-old Nathan moves with his father and grandfather to Pea Island off the coast of North Carolina, where he hopes to join the all-black crew at the nearby lifesaving station, despite his father's objections.

## **Things Not Seen by Andrew Clements**

Fifteen-year-old Bobby thinks he knows what it's like to be invisible—he's used to being ignored by the popular kids at school (especially the girls). Even his parents hardly seem to notice whether he's home or not. Then one morning, Bobby wakes up to find that he IS invisible. For real. He can't stop wondering if he'll ever reappear—especially when his parents wreck their car and wind up in the hospital. Now Bobby is all alone. How can he survive in a world where he can't be seen? One thing's for sure: Bobby's not going to just wait around to see if his body will decide to show up again on its own. He's got to take action. Fast.

## **Love That Dog by Sharon Creech**

Jack hates poetry. Only girls write it and every time he tries to, his brain feels empty. But his teacher, Ms. Stretchberry, won't stop giving her class poetry assignments—and Jack can't avoid them. But then something amazing happens. The more he writes, the more he learns he does have something to say.

## **Dovey Coe by Francis O'Roark Dowell**

Dovey Coe says what's on her mind, so it's no secret that she can't stand Parnell Caraway. Parnell may be the son of the richest man in town, but he's mean and snobby, and Dovey can't stand the fact that he's courting her sister, Caroline, or the way he treats her brother, Amos, as if he were stupid just because he can't hear. So when Parnell turns up dead, and Dovey's in the room where his body is discovered, she soon finds herself on trial for murder. Can the outspoken Dovey sit still and trust a city slicker lawyer who's still wet behind the ears to get her out of the biggest mess of her life?

## **The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis**

Eleven-year-old Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital city during the Taliban rule. Parvana's father- a

history teacher until his school was bombed and his health destroyed- works from a blanket on the ground in the marketplace, reading letters for people who cannot read or write. One day he is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education, and the family is left without someone who can earn money or even shop for food. As conditions in the family grow desperate, only one solution emerges. Forbidden by the Taliban government to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy and become the breadwinner.

### **Wild Man Island by Will Hobbs**

On the last day of a sea kayak trip in southeast Alaska, fourteen-year-old Andy Galloway paddles away from the group. He's on a mission of the heart. His father, an archeologist, died only a few miles away. A sudden gale propels Andy across the strait. He swims ashore, freezing and barefoot, onto Admiralty Island, an immense wilderness of forests, rain, and bears. When hope of rescue fades, Andy starts walking. Starvation leads him further into the wild and into danger. He encounters a dog running with wolves, and later a man dressed in cedar-bark clothing, carrying a stone-tipped spear. The Wild Man vanishes into the forest, but the dog reappears and leads Andy to ... the Wild Man's lair, at the mouth of a cave. It's fear that drives Andy into the cave and to the adventure of a lifetime. What's at stake are the discoveries Andy's father died trying to find, the answers to the most exciting puzzle in American archeology — who were the first Americans?

### **The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn by Dorothy & Thomas Hoobler**

While attempting to solve the mystery of a stolen jewel, Seikei, a merchant's son who longs to be a samurai, joins a group of kabuki actors in eighteenth-century Japan.

### **Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz**

They told him his uncle died in a car accident. But fourteen-year-old Alex knows that's a lie, and the bullet holes in his uncle's windshield confirm his suspicions. But nothing could prepare him for the news that the uncle he always thought he knew was really a spy for MI6-Britain's top secret intelligence agency. Recruited to find his uncle's killers and complete his final mission, Alex suddenly finds himself caught in a deadly game of cat and mouse.

### **No More Dead Dogs by Gordon Korman**

Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sentenced to detention attending rehearsals of the school play where, in spite of himself, he becomes wrapped up in the production and begins to suggest changes that improve not only the play but his life as well.

### **Hidden Talents by David Lubar**

When thirteen-year-old Martin arrives at an alternative school for misfits and problem students, he falls in with a group of boys with psychic powers and discovers something surprising about himself.

### **Legend of Lady Ilena by Patricia Malone**

Ilena, daughter of Moren and Grenna, has lived in the Vale of Enfert for all of her 15 years, but it is not her true home. Her parents refused to speak about the place they came from or their lineage. After the deaths of both of her parents, her questions remain unanswered. Her father's final words to her provide the single clue: "Go to Dun Alyn. Find Ryamen." Ilena sets out alone on the dangerous trip across Britain, certain only that Dun Alyn is a fortress somewhere in the East. Her skills as a warrior are tested against raiders from the West and Painted Ones from the Far North, but her most formidable challenge awaits her at Dun Alyn. Will she be able to accept her true identity and fulfill her destiny?

### **Belle Teal by Ann M. Martin**

Ten-year-old Belle Teal Harper lives with her mother and grandmother in a small rural town in the early 1960s. Though they don't have much, Belle Teal feels rich with love and loyalty to her family and her best friends, Clarice and Little Boss. As a new school year begins, Belle Teal faces unexpected challenges. Her Gran's memory is slipping away. Her mother works longer hours to support the family. Little Boss' troubled relationship with his father is pushing the boy to extremes. And there are new students in Belle Teal's class: a shy African American boy caught in the center of rampant prejudice, and a new girl whose outward confidence belies the secret she holds close.

### **Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson**

Within Cole Matthews lie anger, rage, and hate. Cole has been stealing, fighting, and lying for years. His attack on a classmate has left the boy with permanent physical and deep psychological damage and Cole in the biggest trouble of his life. To most, Cole seems beyond hope. But when he's offered a chance at an alternative path called Circle Justice, based on Native American tradition, Cole finds himself banished to a remote Alaskan island, where his rage and isolation lead him to another brazen attack. This time, his intended victim is the Spirit Bear of Native American legend—and the clumsy assault ends with Cole mauled nearly to death, desperately clinging to the life he has tried so hard to waste. Rescuers arrive to save Cole's life, but it is the attack of the Spirit Bear that is the start of Cole's long journey to accepting responsibility for his life and saving his soul.

### **Fair Weather by Richard Peck**

"It was the last day of our old lives, and we didn't even know it. On that day, Rosie Beckett's family receives a letter - possibly the first letter they've ever received from their aunt Euterpe in distant Chicago. It is 1893, the year of the World's Columbian Exposition - the "wonder of the age." Tucked inside the pages of the letter are train tickets. Aunt Euterpe is inviting Rosie's family to the fair!" But is she ready for the tumult of her country relatives? Well, ready or not, they soon arrive: thirteen-year-old Rosie and her lovelorn older sister, Lottie, feeling a bit stiff in their new skirts; seven-year-old Buster, whose pockets always conceal some jumping creature or other; and an unlikely chaperone who'll be the first of many breathtaking surprises for everybody. As for Rosie, she will forever recall the marvels of that summer, and how she found her future at the fair.

**Foster's War by Carolyn Reeder**

Meet eleven-year-old Foster Simmons, whose older brother, Mel, is fighting in World War II. At home with his demanding father, Foster does his best to win his own personal battles.

**Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz Ryan**

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.

**Zach's Lie by Roland Smith**

Jack is a pretty average kid - until the night that changes his life forever. That is the night men in masks break into his house, threaten Jack and his family, and then ransack their home. It is that same night that Jack discovers that his father has been arrested for drug trafficking and that he is the reason why these men have come into their lives. Jack, his mother, and his sister are then forced to enter the Witness Security Program. Jack becomes "Zach" and moves to Elko, Nevada, a town in the middle of nowhere. There he meets Sam, the strangest school custodian he has ever encountered, and Catalin, a girl who might make Zach's uprooting worth the trouble. But just as Zach finally begins to piece together a new life, he finds out that the dangerous men have tracked them down again. And if they are found, it will be more than their secret identities that will be destroyed.

**Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanen**

The first time she saw him, she flipped. The first time he saw her, he ran. That was the second grade, but not much has changed by the seventh. She says: "My Bryce. Still walking around with my first kiss." He says: "It's been six years of strategic avoidance and social discomfort." But in the eighth grade everything gets turned upside down. And just as he's thinking there's more to her than meets the eye, she's thinking that he's not quite all he seemed. This is a classic romantic comedy of errors told in alternating chapters by two fresh, funny new voices.

**Love, Ruby Lavender by Deborah Wiles**

When her quirky grandmother goes to Hawaii for the summer, nine-year-old Ruby learns to survive on her own in Mississippi by writing letters, befriending chickens as well as the new girl in town, and finally coping with her grandfather's death.